

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 05229

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV BQG
SUBJECT: FRG CONCERNS ABOUT SOVIET/GDR POLICY

REF: USBER 626

1. WE WOULD CAUTION AGAINST GIVING TOO MUCH WEIGHT TO THE REMARKS MADE BY WEGENER OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE DURING HIS ORIENTATION VISIT TO MISSION BERLIN (REFTEL). WEGENER IS BRIGHT AND ARTICULATE, AND WE FIND HIM BOTH FRIENDLY AND COOPERATIVE AS A BONN GROUP COLLEAGUE. HE IS, HOWEVER, THE MOST JUNIOR MEMBER OF THE FRG BONN GROUP DELEGATION, AN "ASPIRANT" ON HIS FIRST TOUR OF DUTY WHO HAS BEEN IN THE BERLIN OFFICE OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE ONLY 8 OR 9 MONTHS. HE DOES HIS HOMEWORK WELL AND UNDERSTANDS THE BASIC ISSUES, BUT HE HAS NO PREVIOUS BERLIN EXPERIENCE AGAINST WHICH TO MEASURE HIS PERCEPTIONS OF PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS.

2. THE STATEMENTS REPORTED IN REFTEL TO SOME EXTENT REFLECT VIEWS WHICH WEGENER'S SUPERVISOR, VON BRAUNMUEHL, HAS ALSO EXPRESSED ON A PRELIMINARY BASIS ON OCCASION IN THE BONN GROUP. THEY DO NOT, HOWEVER, REPRESENT WHAT HAS BEEN COMMUNICATED TO US AS A
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CONSIDERED FOREIGN OFFICE VIEW, AND WE FEEL CERTAIN THAT WEGENER WAS NOT SPEAKING WITH USBER UNDER INSTRUCTIONS BUT WAS SIMPLY EXPRESSING PERSONAL VIEWS DURING A GENERAL TOUR D'HORIZON.

3. IT THUS SEEMS PREMATURE TO EQUATE WEGENER'S REMARKS WITH THE FOREIGN OFFICE FRAME OF MIND OR TO GO FROM

THERE TO ANTICIPATING AN OFFICIAL FRG REQUEST FOR ANY PARTICULAR ALLIED ACTION. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT THERE WILL BE NO SUCH REQUEST, AS WE RECALL THAT VAN WELL, IN LAUNCHING THE BONN GROUP STUDY ON REPRESENTATION IN 1976 SUGGESTED THAT ALLIED APPROACHES TO THE SOVIETS BECAUSE OF PROBLEMS THEN BEING EXPERIENCED MIGHT BE IN ORDER. FOR THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, THE ONLY PROPOSAL BEFORE US IS IN THE FORM OF A SUGGESTION FROM VON BRAUNMUEHL THAT THE BONN GROUP CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS OF PRESENT SOVIET AND GDR TACTICS WITH RESPECT TO BERLIN. THIS IS A SUBJECT WE WILL TAKE UP IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

4. THE SEMI-ANNUAL ASSESSMENT TO BE PREPARED BY THE BONN GROUP IN PREPARATION FOR THE QUADRIPARTITE DINNER IN MAY WILL PROVIDE A VEHICLE FOR A MORE ANALYTICAL APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM THAN THE INFORMAL CONVERSATION WITH WEGENER. THE ASSESSMENT SHOULD ALSO PROVIDE A SPRINGBOARD FOR RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH ANY OF THE FOUR MAY WISH TO LAUNCH WITH REGARD TO FUTURE ALLIED OR FRG APPROACHES.
STOESSEL

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